

[CLICK HERE FOR SUPERVISOR KNABE MOTION](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR CAO MEMO DATED 1-30-06](#)

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

January 31, 2006

January 2006 marks the fifth anniversary of the Safe Surrender legislation. The law allows a parent or legal guardian to surrender an infant that is no more than three days old confidentially and without fear of prosecution to any hospital or fire station, as long as the infant shows no signs of abuse. Since the passage of the law 5 years ago, 35 precious lives in this County have been saved, as a result of our efforts to get the message of “no shame, no blame, no names” out to the community. Neighboring counties such as Orange County have also followed our example here in Los Angeles by taking up the standard to protect newborns by becoming Safe Surrender counties as well.

The Safe Surrender taskforce I convened back in 2001 has articulated the need to continue to keep the message out there, in order to ensure that babies at risk of being abandoned have a chance at being saved, and that women at risk of doing this and the people who know them have an opportunity to do the right thing.

This month, State Assemblyman Alberto Torrico has introduced Assembly Bill 1873 (AB 1873) for consideration, which if passed, would help our efforts considerably at the county level to protect newborns.

- MORE -

MOTION

MOLINA	_____
BURKE	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
KNABE	_____
ANTONOVICH	_____

The bill would also appropriate \$5,000,000 to the Department of Social Services to conduct a statewide awareness campaign.

The bill would also expand the scope of the Safe Surrender provisions to apply to children who are one year of age or younger. While I am recommending that this Board support AB 1873, I am not in favor of this provision.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors (1) support AB 1873 (Torrico), if amended to maintain the current scope of the Safe Surrender program to infants up to 72 hours of age; and allow local Board of Supervisors to designate Safe Surrender sites, and (2) designate January 2006 as Safe Surrender month in Los Angeles County, to commemorate the passage of the original Safe Haven law in California.

#

NI:cy



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://cao.co.la.ca.us>

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

January 30, 2006

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

**MOTION TO SUPPORT ASSEMBLY BILL 1873 (TORRICO), IF AMENDED, AND TO
DESIGNATE JANUARY 2006 AS SAFE SURRENDER MONTH IN LOS ANGELES
COUNTY (ITEM NO. 70-B, AGENDA OF JANUARY 31, 2006)**

Item No. 70-B on the January 31, 2006 Agenda is a motion by Supervisor Knabe recommending that the Board of Supervisors support AB 1873 (Torricon), if amended to maintain the current scope of the Safe Surrender Program to infants up to 72 hours of age and retain current provisions which allow a county Board of Supervisors to designate sites. The motion also recommends that the Board designate January 2006 as Safe Surrender month to commemorate the passage of California's Safe Haven Law.

As introduced on January 18, 2006, AB 1873 would: 1) designate fire stations as Safe Surrender sites; 2) raise the age at which a minor child can be surrendered from 72 hours old or younger to one year of age or younger; 3) appropriate \$5 million to the California Department of Social Services to conduct a statewide awareness campaign publicizing the existence of Safe Surrender sites; and 4) require the State to establish and operate a toll-free telephone number to provide information and assistance to the public regarding Safe Surrender sites.

Current law allows a parent to surrender a child 72 hours or younger to a designated Safe Surrender site without incurring any criminal liability under the State's child abandonment laws. The Board of Supervisors has the authority to designate Safe Surrender sites. Additionally, current law allows a public or private hospital to be designated as a Safe Surrender site.

In 2005, your Board sponsored SB 116 (Dutton) which eliminated the January 1, 2006 sunset date for the Safe Haven Law. SB 116 was signed by the Governor on October 7, 2005.

The Departments of Children and Family and Fire endorse the recommendation to support AB 1873, if amended to maintain the Board's discretion to designate Safe Surrender sites for infants up to 72 hours old.

The provision in AB 1873, which provides \$5 million to conduct a statewide public awareness campaign on Safe Surrender sites, is consistent with current Board policy to promote and publicize the Safe Haven Law. Previous County-sponsored legislation, SB 139 (Brulte), amended State law to allow a Board of Supervisors to designate Safe Surrender sites other than hospital emergency rooms. In addition, the Board has consistently supported legislation which maintains the age at which a child can be safely surrendered at 72 hours or younger. **Therefore, the recommendation to support AB 1873, if amended, is consistent with Board policy.**

DEJ:GK
MAL:JF:VE:MS:cc

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Director, Department of Children and Family Services